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MINISTRY OF HEALTH
PRIVATE BAG 0038
GABORONE

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MHW 1/13/II (298)

04 DECEMBER 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

PATIENTS AFFECTED BY LESS EFFICACIOUS TB DRUGS TO BE RE-ASSESSED

In November 2025, routine surveillance of Tuberculosis (TB) treatment patterns across districts, revealed an increase in treatment failures. Following this, the Ministry of Health promptly initiated measures to address the issue and protect public safety. The specific batch of the TB drugs with the poor outcomes was quarantined and taken for testing. The results showed that the concerned Fixed Dose Combination (FDC) drugs were deficient of two critical anti-TB molecules: Rifampicin and Ethambutol.

Through surveillance, the Ministry discovered that 40 patients were not responding to treatment as expected. Though it is possible for some patients not to respond to treatment for various reasons, this number was considered high, when compared with 22 patients who were recorded as not responding to treatment at the same time last year. **Case investigations were conducted including the decision to recall the drugs and conduct quality tests as indicated above.**

All patients who were exposed to the concerned drugs are currently being clinically re-assessed and managed with alternative drugs according to their stage of treatment. In addition, clinical guidelines have been developed to guide clinicians and health care workers across the country on the appropriate steps to take, including psychosocial support. **As part of TB infection prevention and control, contact tracing is being conducted, together with routine TB screening of community members accessing health facilities.**

The public is therefore, advised not to panic, but to take precautions to reduce TB transmission by among others, avoiding congregated settings, staying in well-ventilated spaces and practicing cough etiquette. Additionally, anyone experiencing signs and symptoms of TB like cough, unintentional weight loss, fever and night sweats, is advised to report to the nearest health facility so that they can be screened and/ or tested for TB.

The public is further assured that the Ministry of Health has robust medicines quality assurance mechanisms in place to safeguard public safety, like the post marketing surveillance that BoMRA routinely conducts, as well as the disease outcome surveillance that led to the discovery of the TB treatment failures above.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Nyanga', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Christopher Nyanga
For Permanent Secretary